



MEETING NOTES

**SR 136 STAKEHOLDER MEETING WITH NORTHWEST GEORGIA REGIONAL
COMMISSION
PICKENS COUNTY, GEORGIA
GS&P Project No. 26340.09**

MEETING DATE: December 14, 2009

PARTICIPANTS: Scott Shelton — Gresham, Smith and Partners (GS&P)
Kent Black – Gresham, Smith and Partners (GS&P)
Jody Braswell – Gresham, Smith and Partners (GS&P)
Jill Brown – Edwards–Pitman Environmental (EP)
Lisa Crawford – Edwards-Pitman Environmental (EP)
Kevin McAuliff – Northwest Georgia Regional Commission (NWGRC)
David Howerin – Northwest Georgia Regional Commission (NWGRC)

DISCUSSION: SR 136 SAFETY PROJECT

1. In regard to animosity about the project in 2007, NWGRC noted that the local residents were aware of a developer's plan in close proximity to SR 136 and the residents assumed the road improvements were for the developer, and would involve widening SR 136. The residents were angry since widening of SR 136 would impact the cultural and historical resources. GS&P will investigate further to determine if the development is still moving forward or not.
2. GS&P stated the purpose of the project is to address safety concerns due to the high number of accidents along the SR 136 corridor.
3. GS&P stated the history of the project per the attached agenda and noted that based on FHWA guidance in 2008, additional coordination was needed with stakeholders along SR 136.
4. GS&P presented the fact sheet and noted that half of all the crashes on SR 136 are either injury or fatal crashes, and most of the crashes are happening off the road which can be attributed to the horizontal and vertical design of the road. Also, inadequate vertical design might be the cause of accidents along the straight sections of roadway on SR 136.

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5. GS&P noted that the injury and fatal crash rate is higher than the statewide average and is higher than similar roadway facilities in close proximity to SR 136.
6. GS&P has been tasked by GDOT to form a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) for the project to gather information about SR 136 and build consensus for an alternative that will improve safety and preserve the cultural and historical resources.
7. NWGRC stated that the alleged cemetery on SR 136 originally had no organizational grave stones, but now the cemetery has organized head stones. In addition, some people believe their ancestors are buried in the cemetery and they hold ceremonies at the cemetery to honor their ancestors with out permission from the property owner.
8. To support the cemetery exists; a local dowser was hired and investigated the site. The dowser claims to have located the old fort site and identified the people buried at the cemetery. Reverend Walker has documented many of the cultural and historical resources, but NWGRC does not believe the data to be accurate and would not recommend coordinating with him.
9. To protect the property and prevent trespassing, the property owner built a fence around the cemetery. The property owner is concerned the cemetery could be labeled a cultural/historical resource and prevents the property from being redeveloped. NWGRC recommended GS&P meet with the property owner about the SR 136 safety project.
10. NWGRC is certain the Fort was an Indian removal site, but does not believe there are any Indians buried at the cemetery since the Fort was in existence for a short time. EP also does not believe the cemetery is culturally significant. The location of the Fort is unknown. Also, the Cherokee Indians do not recognize the cemetery as part of their ancestry.
11. NWGRC noted that the Trail of Tears follows the Old Federal Road and part of the Old Federal Road is underneath existing SR 136. Traces of Old Federal Road are on both sides of SR 136
12. GS&P stated that to facilitate public involvement a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) would be formed from stakeholders in the area and would meet 2-3 times to gather information and build consensus for an alternative to address safety issues and preserve cultural and historical resources.



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13. NWGRC recommended Kevin McAuliff represent them on the CAC and asked that David Howerin be updated on stakeholder and CAC meetings.

This represents our understanding of the items discussed at this meeting. If you have any questions or comments concerning any of the information contained herein, please contact me.

Prepared by: Scott Shelton, P.E.
Project Manager

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